

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A composition comprising:
a first oligonucleotide and a second oligonucleotide, wherein:
the first oligonucleotide and the second oligonucleotide are not covalently linked to each other;
at least a portion of the first oligonucleotide is complementary to at least a portion of the second oligonucleotide and to a target nucleic acid; and
at least one of the first and second oligonucleotides comprises a conjugate group;
wherein at least one of (i) the first oligonucleotide comprises a 5' region comprising 2'-OCH₃ modified nucleosides; a central region comprising b-D-ribonucleosides; and a 3' region comprising 2'-OCH₃ modified nucleosides and (ii) the second oligonucleotide comprises a 5' region comprising nucleosides joined by phosphorothioate linkages; a central region comprising β-D-ribonucleosides; and a 3' region comprising nucleosides joined by phosphorothioate linkages is present.
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 - 2-3. (canceled)
 4. (currently amended) The composition of claim 1 wherein each of the first and second oligonucleotides comprises 17 to 25 nucleotides.
 - 5-8. (canceled)
 9. (currently amended) The composition of claim 1 wherein the second oligonucleotide comprises a plurality of ribose nucleotide units.
 - 10-100. (canceled)

101. (original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the composition of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

102-109. (canceled)

110. (previously presented) The composition of claim 1 wherein the first oligonucleotide comprises

- a 5' region comprising 2'-OCH₃ modified nucleosides;
- a central region comprising β -D-ribonucleosides; and
- a 3' region comprising 2'-OCH₃ modified nucleosides.

111. (previously presented) The composition of claim 110 wherein the nucleosides in the 5' and 3' regions are joined by phosphorothioate linkages.

112. (previously presented) The composition of claim 111 wherein the nucleosides in the central region are joined by phosphorothioate linkages.

113. (previously presented) The composition of claim 1 wherein the second oligonucleotide comprises

- a 5' region comprising nucleosides joined by phosphorothioate linkages;
- a central region comprising β -D-ribonucleosides; and
- a 3' region comprising nucleosides joined by phosphorothioate linkages.

114. (previously presented) The composition of claim 113 wherein the 5' and 3' regions each independently comprise 2'-OCH₃ modified nucleosides.